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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN ELECTIONS: KEY RETURNING MEPS

REF: A. A) BRUSSELS 1090

[B. B\) BRUSSELS 1094](#)

[C. C\) BRUSSELS 1736](#)

[D. D\) BRUSSELS 2061](#)

[E. E\) BRUSSELS 2107](#)

Classified By: USEU POLOFF TODD HUIZINGA, FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: With the campaign now in full swing, almost all of the party lists for the June 10-13 European elections have been released in the 25 EU member states. This message describes some of the influential members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who, based on their party-list ranking, are likely to be re-elected and affect U.S. interests in the coming term. END SUMMARY.

SERIES OF PRE-ELECTION REPORTS

[1](#)2. (U) This is the fifth in a series of reports on the European elections. Ref A provides general background on the European Parliament (EP) and the European elections; ref B is a broad analysis of expected campaign issues and election outcomes; ref C analyzes the possible impact on the EP of MEPs from the 10 new EU member states; and ref E discusses the role of U.S.-EU relations in the elections campaign. The final cable in the series will examine possible post-election realignment of EP party groups.

POETTERING FOR PRESIDENT?

[1](#)3. (C) Hans-Gert Poettering, 58, is first on the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) list in the German state of Lower Saxony, and recognized in Germany as the CDU's top candidate nationally. An MEP since 1979, he studied law, history and political science in Bonn, Geneva and at Columbia University in New York (in 1971), obtaining his doctorate in 1974. He is an honorary professor at the University of Osnabrueck in the district he represents. In the EP, Poettering has been Chairman of the EPP-ED group (Christian Democrats and Conservatives) since 1999 and is expected to keep that position for at least the first half of the coming term.

[1](#)4. (C) Poettering is a strong believer in further EU integration but has acted pragmatically in attempting to assure the EPP-ED of a continued plurality in the Parliament. Earlier this year Poettering and Tory leader Michael Howard negotiated a deal keeping the euroskeptic UK Conservatives in the EPP-ED and opening the door to center-right euroskeptic parties from the new member states.

[1](#)5. (C) If the EPP-ED comes out of the June elections with its plurality intact, Poettering will be a prime candidate for EP President. In meetings with U.S. officials, Poettering tends to repeat assurances that he is a friend of the U.S. while chiding his U.S. interlocutors at length on U.S. policy with which he disagrees, and alleged U.S. unilateralism and lack of interest in the EU.

ELMAR BROK: A GERMAN MULTILATERALIST

[1](#)6. (C) Elmar Brok, 58, EPP-ED, is first on the CDU list in the German state of Nordrhein-Westfalen. After earning a degree in law and political science, he worked for a short time as a journalist but quickly moved into politics. An MEP since 1979, Brok was Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee this term. As one of the EP representatives to the Convention on the Future of Europe, Brok has actively contributed to the debate on the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty, tabling numerous proposals and amendments. His flamboyant and volatile style (at times, he seems to be either fast asleep or delivering a passionate discourse, often peppered with biting criticism) leaves few indifferent.

[1](#)7. (C) As Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman, Brok has made transatlantic relations a priority. He believes that further EU integration, a Europe that speaks with "one voice" on foreign and security policy, is necessary for the equal

partnership on which a strong U.S.-EU relationship must ultimately be based. Both Brok and Poettering (see paras 3-5) are typical German Christian-Democrat "multilateralist" MEPs, whose inclinations toward the United States waver between a commitment to good transatlantic relations and an ideological attachment to multilateralism that tends to entail a measure of antipathy toward the U.S. In meetings with U.S. officials Brok has sometimes displayed the aforementioned volatility, providing his counterparts with frank and audible exchanges.

JAMES ELLES: TRANSATLANTIC NETWORKER

18. (C) James Elles, 54, EPP-ED, is third on the Conservative list in the South East region, UK. (NOTE: With that position on the list, we consider his re-election probable, but not certain. END NOTE.) Elles was educated at Eton College and Edinburgh University. After a stint in the private sector for Arthur Young, the predecessor of Ernst and Young, Ellis worked from 1976-84 in the European Commission. For four of those years, he was the Assistant to the Director-General for Agriculture. Elles has been an MEP since 1984. He is the first British Conservative to have been elected a Vice President of the EP.

19. (C) Elles founded and is the principal force behind the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN), an association that brings together members of Congress, MEPs and the American and European business and academic communities to "build transatlantic bridges." Elles is largely responsible for the TPN strategy for strengthening the transatlantic partnership, which contains formulations and recommendations that are gaining momentum on both sides of the Atlantic. The foremost example of this is the proposal to build a fundamentally barrier-free "Transatlantic Market," concentrating first on financial services and capital markets, civil aviation, the digital economy, competition policy and regulatory cooperation. Elles also founded the European Ideas Network (EIN), an EPP-ED-sponsored pan-European network for exchange of views on the challenges facing the EU. EIN events have attracted leading figures in the European center-right. Elles is an expert networker on both sides of the Atlantic, well connected in the U.S. Congress. He is a persistent salesman of his ideas on transatlantic relations, and skilled at motivating people to support his projects.

GRAHAM WATSON: AMBITIOUS LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

10. (C) Graham Watson, 48, ELDR, is first on the Liberal Democrat list, South West region, UK. Born and raised in Scotland, Watson earned his degree in modern languages. He speaks four European languages and is a trained interpreter. From 1983-87 Watson was Head of the private office of Sir David Steel MP, then Leader of the Liberal Party. Before joining the EP, Watson worked in London and Hong Kong for the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. An MEP since 1994, Watson succeeded Pat Cox as the Chairman of the ELDR group (European Liberal Democrat and Reformist Party) when Cox became EP President in 2002.

11. (C) Under Watson's leadership the ELDR quickly became a noticeably more vocal critic of U.S. policy. Watson has repeatedly spoken out on U.S. policy on many issues, calling again and again, for example, for trials for Guantanamo detainees and for U.S. support of the International Criminal Court (ICC). He also is a primary advocate of increasing data protection measures in legislation, which has inhibited cooperation with the U.S. on biometrics and sharing of Passenger Name Records (PNR) or airline passengers. On the other hand, Watson shares the U.S. view on the China arms embargo and has been one of the strongest opponents of the efforts of some member states to lift the EU embargo. Watson has played a central role, along with European Commission President Romano Prodi and French Union for French Democracy (UDF) leader Francois Bayrou, in the possible formation, after the June elections, of a new centrist, federalist EP party group. The group would include the ELDR, members of the French UDF, Prodi's Italian center-left Marguerita Party, and several regional parties. Watson is personable and attentive in meetings. He is ambitious and articulate.

TERENCE WYNN: POSSIBLE EP PRESIDENT

12. (C) Terence (Terry) Wynn, 57, PES, third on the Labour list, North West region, UK. From 1962-74, Wynn was in the royal navy, starting as an engineer apprentice and leaving as a seagoing marine engineer. From 1974-79, he was a works engineer, engineer surveyor and shipyard manager. He worked as a training executive for the next ten years, earning a Master's degree in manpower studies and industrial relations

in 1984. Still active as an itinerant Methodist preacher, Wynn is a member of the Christian Socialist Movement and author of the book "Onward Christian Socialist." An MEP since 1989, Wynn is Chairman of the Budgets Committee, which oversees a large part of the EU budget. Wynn is rumored to be in the running for EP President, although some interlocutors say there may be significant opposition to Wynn's candidacy. Wynn has been informative and responsive in meetings with U.S. officials; a Wynn EP presidency would be relatively good news for the U.S.

MARTIN SCHULZ: BERLUSCONI-BAITER TO PES LEADER?

¶13. (C) Martin Schultz, 48, PES, is first on the Social Democratic Party (SPD) list in Germany. After finishing school, Schulz took a two-year apprenticeship in bookselling. In 1982 he opened his own bookstore, which he ran for twelve years. During that period he was also active in local politics. In 1987, he became mayor of his hometown of Wuerstelen, at age 31 the youngest mayor in the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen. Elected MEP in 1994, Schulz is Vice Chairman of the PES group and within that, Chairman of the German SPD group. According to our interlocutors, Schulz is currently the favorite (but not a shoo-in) to become PES Chairman in the coming term. Schultz made headlines throughout Europe in July 2003, when his baiting of Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi during an EP debate led Berlusconi to shoot back that Schultz reminded him of a Nazi concentration camp guard -- a comment for which German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder demanded an apology. Berlusconi said later he was joking, claiming according to some press reports that he was referring to Schulz, resemblance to Sergeant Schultz of the TV series &Hogan's Heroes.8

HANNES SWOBODA: ALTERNATIVE PES CHAIRMAN?

¶14. (C) Hannes Swoboda, 57, PES, first on the Social Democratic Party list, Austria. After receiving an M.A. in economics and a doctorate in law, Swoboda worked for the Vienna Chamber of Labor (Arbeiterkammer) from 1972-86, working especially on financial economics, environmental policy and municipal policy. From 1983-96 he held various political offices in Vienna. Swoboda has been an MEP since ¶1996. During the 1999-2004 term, he was a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Vice Chairman of the EP Delegation for Relations with Southeast Europe and member of the EP Delegation for Relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council. A Vice Chairman of the PES group, Swoboda is a frequent and articulate participant in EP debates on foreign affairs. He is especially interested in the Balkans and active in EP deliberations on the EU Stabilization and Association progress of countries of the former Yugoslavia. Swoboda is an outspoken opponent of U.S. policy in Iraq and of U.S. "arrogance," as he once put it in a meeting with a U.S. official, regarding the International Criminal Court. Although very blunt in his criticism, Swoboda is also pragmatic and willing to work with the U.S. on issues before the EP that affect U.S. interests. Swoboda may become Chairman of the PES group if Martin Schulz cannot garner enough support (see para 13).

EMMA NICHOLSON: ANTI-ADOPTION ENIGMA;
SUPPORTER ON IRAQ

¶15. (C) Baroness Emma Nicholson of Winterbourne, 62, ELDR, second on the Liberal Democrat list in the South East region, UK. (NOTE: Her position on the list does not guarantee her re-election. END NOTE.) A patron of over 50 charity organizations, Nicholson was long-time Director of International Development and Director of Fundraising for the Save the Children Fund (1974-85). She is also a World Health Organization (WHO) Envoy for Health, Peace and Development. Before joining the Liberal Democrats in 1995, Nicholson was Vice Chairperson of the Conservative Party (1983-87). She was elected Conservative MP in the House of Commons in 1987. Since 1997, she has been a Life Peer and Member of the House of Lords. An MEP since 1999, Nicholson was Foreign Affairs Committee Vice Chairperson this term.

¶16. (C) EP Rapporteur on Romania this term, Nicholson is best known to U.S. officials as an implacable foe of inter-country adoptions of Romanian children. She believes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child forbids inter-country adoption except as a very last resort, and she maintains that group-home-style institutionalization is a preferable alternative. Nicholson is also greatly interested in the Islamic world, and is founder and President of the AMAR International Charitable Foundation that assists Marsh Arabs and refugees. Unlike most of her ELDR colleagues, Nicholson supported U.S.-UK military action in Iraq. In both the positive and negative sense, Nicholson is a crusader on human

rights issues. She has won -- deservedly -- both respect and mistrust for her single-mindedness. Interlocutors should speak clearly and at appropriate volume: deaf in one ear, Nicholson tries, sometimes unsuccessfully, to read lips.

DANIEL COHN-BENDIT: CHARISMATIC GREENS LEADER

17. (C) Daniel Cohn-Bendit, 59, second on the Greens list, Germany. Born in France and schooled in Germany, the current member of the French Greens group is running on the German party list this time. After having returned to France to study at the University of Nanterre, Cohn-Bendit became a leader of the May Revolution in Paris in 1968. Known then as "Dany le Rouge" (Danny the Red), he was expelled from France after the May riots. Cohn-Bendit then established himself, along with current German FonMin Joschka Fischer, as an anarcho-revolutionary activist and publisher in Frankfurt. In 1984 Cohn-Bendit joined the German Greens party, where he, again with Joschka Fischer, became a prominent "realist" and opponent of the "eco-fundamentalist" wing of the Greens party. An MEP since 1994, Cohn-Bendit has co-chaired the Greens/Free European Alliance group in the EP since 2002. His fame and charisma has brought the Greens more impact and visibility than their numbers would lead one to expect. In February of this year, Cohn-Bendit was a driving force behind the founding of a "European Green Party," and, although he is second on the German list because Greens custom demands a woman lead the list, Cohn-Bendit is the acknowledged leading figure in the Greens campaign throughout Europe.

CAROLINE JACKSON: MEASURED AND THOUGHTFUL

18. (C) Caroline Jackson, 57, EPP-ED, second on the Conservatives list in the South West region, UK. Jackson studied classics and history and earned a doctorate at Oxford with a thesis on politics in the nineteenth century. She is married to UK MP Robert Jackson. An MEP since 1984, she was Chairman of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy Committee during this term. Articulate, intelligent and soft-spoken, Jackson has been a key interlocutor for U.S. officials in Brussels on a wide range of issues from GM foods to the Kyoto Protocol and the proposed Chemicals Directive (REACH). Like most of her Conservative compatriots, Jackson is critical of the Brussels tendency to over-regulate; at the same time, she has made it a priority to investigate member states' poor implementation of EU law. Jackson made the news this spring when, after having succeeded in getting British-style breakfast on the EP cafeteria menu, she complained that "the scrambled egg tastes (like) recycled EU documents...thanks to European food safety rules...." She said she would follow up with Food Safety Commissioner David Byrne.

SARAH LUDFORD: GUANTANAMO CRUSADER

19. (C) Baroness Sarah Ludford, 53, ELDR, first on the Liberal Democrat list, London, UK. An economist, barrister and a life peer in the British House of Lords since 1997, Ludford was elected MEP in 1999. She was an active member of the Citizen Rights committee this term, where she championed measures to protect victims of trafficking in persons, as the U.S. has, but consistently opposed the U.S. on Guantanamo, PNR and other policies she believes violate human rights. During a November 2003 visit to the U.S., the Washington Post quoted her on her views on the U.S. government: "We think (Colin Powell) is our only hope....He's the only one in the Bush administration who has some sanity about him. The others are completely mad." Ludford told us the quote was accurate, but claimed she did not know she was speaking on the record. The de facto EP lead on Guantanamo, Ludford organized a public hearing on the issue to which she invited relatives of EU-member-state citizen Guantanamo detainees. The hearing garnered extensive TV, radio and print coverage -- Ludford alienates even many of her EP colleagues with her outspokenness and lack of discretion, but she is effective in bringing attention to her issues.

ERIKA MANN: KEY PRO-U.S. SOCIAL DEMOCRAT

20. (C) Erika Mann, 53, PES, eighth on the SPD list, Germany. A business consultant by trade, Mann has been an MEP since 1994. In the EP, Mann focuses on industry and trade policy, information society and telecommunications, and transatlantic relations. She is a co-founder of the Transatlantic Policy Network (TPN) with James Elles (see paras 8-9). Mann is very active in TPN and is a key proponent of strong transatlantic relations in the EP. She is key precisely because she is an influential MEP in the German SPD -- the largest national group within the Party of European Socialists (PES) and a

group not currently known as particularly pro-American. In fact, her pro-U.S. stance has earned her the occasional nickname of "Am-Erica Mann." She comes from the German state of Lower Saxony (although eighth on the SPD list nationally, she is the top Lower Saxony candidate), where her SPD comrade Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder hails from -- she knows Schroeder and is well connected to his many close SPD associates from Lower Saxony.

ANDERS WIJLMAN: INTERLOCUTOR ON DEVELOPMENT

21. (C) Anders Wijkman, 59, EPP-ED, first on the Christian Democrat list, Sweden. An MEP since 1999, Wijkman has had an illustrious public affairs career. He has been a member of the Swedish parliament (1971-78); Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross (1979-88); Head of the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (1989-91); and Assistant UN Administrator and Head of Policy at the UNDP (1995-97). Since 1998, Wijkman has held the title of Ambassador in the Swedish Foreign Ministry. He is a member of the Club of Rome, the World Academy of Art and Science and the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences. An MEP since 1999, Wijkman specializes in environment and development issues, with a particular focus on the Kyoto Protocol, renewable energy sources, HIV-AIDS in developing countries, and population policies. Wijkman has effectively pursued dialogue with U.S. officials on development assistance (in which the EP plays a key role). He has been a key supporter of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). In meetings with U.S. officials, he has tempered the harsh attacks of his Development Committee colleagues on the USG decision to cut funds to UNFPA.

KLAUS-HEINER LEHNE: BUSINESS REGS POWERHOUSE

22. (C) Klaus-Heiner Lehne, 46, EPP-ED, sixth on the CDU list in the German state of Nordrhein-Westfalen. (NOTE: His re-election is probable, but not certain. END NOTE.) A lawyer by trade, Lehne studied physics, philosophy and law in Freiburg, Bonn, Cologne and his hometown of Duesseldorf. After holding several offices in local politics in Duesseldorf, Lehne was a member of the German parliament (Bundestag) from 1992-94. An MEP since 1994, Lehne has been rapporteur for corporate law, harmonization of contract law, harmonization of civil and commercial law, and money laundering. In all of the above areas and in company law in particular, Lehne's influence is felt throughout the EU institutions; he was a key player in the successful German-led effort to dissipate the reach of the European Commission's takeover proposal. He will be heavily involved as rapporteur or EPP-ED leader in the EP's consideration this fall of new Commission proposals for post-Enron corporate governance measures and FATF-related anti-money laundering legislation. Although not always fully briefed on U.S. positions in these areas, Lehne remains open to dialogue with USG interlocutors and participated earlier this year in a roundtable dinner for SEC Chairman Donaldson.

PETER SKINNER: FINANCIAL SERVICES EXPERT

23. (C) Peter Skinner, 44, PES, first on the Labour list in the South East region, UK. After post-graduate study of labor law, industrial relations and education, Skinner worked as a trade union organizer, university lecturer, and in industrial relations. An MEP since 1994, Skinner is a member of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee. He is also in the EP Delegation for Relations with the U.S., in which he leads on financial affairs and regulatory cooperation. A recognized expert in the EP on those issues, Skinner was EP rapporteur on the "Transparency Directive," which established regular reporting requirements for companies listed on EU stock exchanges. In meetings with U.S. officials, Skinner has shown a genuine desire to increase U.S.-EU regulatory and financial services cooperation, and creativity in moving that agenda forward. He knows many in the USG who work on those issues, including Congressman Michael Oxley, Chairman of the House Committee on Financial Services and co-author of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (which established investor protections and corporate governance standards).

ENRIQUE BARON CRESPO: CURRENT PES CHAIRMAN

24. (C) Enrique Baron Crespo, 60, PES, third on the Spanish Socialist Labour Party (PSOE) list, Spain. After studying law, Baron Crespo worked as a university lecturer and lawyer specializing in labor law. An anti-Franco activist as a young man, Baron Crespo was a Deputy in the Spanish parliament (Cortes) from the fall of the Franco regime in 1977 until 1986. From 1982-85 he was Spanish Minister of

Transport, Tourism and Communications. Baron Crespo became an MEP when Spain joined the EU in 1986. He has served as EP President (1989-1992) and Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (1992-95). He was Chairman of the PES group during the last term, but is not expected to return to that position after the elections. In meetings with U.S. officials, Baron Crespo has been personable and open, but his stances on key issues are often strongly opposed to those of the U.S.

GEOFFREY VAN ORDEN: VERY BRITISH EUROSKEPTIC

125. (C) Geoffrey Van Orden, 59, EPP-ED, first on the Conservative list in the Eastern region, UK. A specialist on defense, Van Orden served in the British Army from 1964-94 and retired as a Brigadier General. His military jobs included member of the directing staff of the German Armed Forces Staff College (1985-88), Chief of Staff Berlin (1988-90), and Head of International Military Staff Secretariat, NATO Headquarters (1991-94). From 1995-99 Van

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Orden worked in the European Commission, covering foreign and security policy and counter-terrorism. An MEP since 1999, Van Orden was Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee this term. He is a strong Atlanticist and supporter of NATO, and opposes all EU defense or security initiatives; he believes that putting the EU label on military initiatives is politically motivated, ignores military realities and ultimately represents an attempt to compete with NATO. An ardent euroskeptic, Van Orden opposes British adoption of the euro and the EU constitutional treaty.

JAMES NICHOLSON: HEAD OF DELEGATION TO U.S.

126. (C) James Nicholson, 59, EPP-ED, first on the Ulster Unionist Party list in Northern Ireland, UK. The only MEP from his party, Nicholson belongs to the British Conservative group in the EPP-ED. It is difficult to say if his party will get enough seats to guarantee his re-election. As the 2002-2004 Chairman of the EP Delegation for Relations with the U.S., he has been the EP lead in the biannual Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD) meetings between MEPs and members of the U.S. Congress. Nicholson has also organized a number of digital videoconferences between MEPS and members of Congress on issues of transatlantic interest. Nicholson is a farmer by trade (one of his sons runs the family farm, which Nicholson likes to work on visits home). Informal and down-to-earth in meetings, Nicholson prefers being called "Jim." Nicholson is a generalist on transatlantic issues -- he neither possesses nor professes expertise in foreign affairs -- but he is an effective cheerleader within the EP for good relations with the U.S. He does not expect to remain U.S. Delegation Chairman during the next term, but he may still be helpful in disseminating U.S. views on key issues to EP colleagues.

DIRK STERCKX: CONSENSUS SEEKER

127. (C) Dirk Sterckx, 57, ELDR, first on the Flemish Liberal Democrat (VLD) list, Belgium. After earning a degree in Germanic philology, Sterckx taught secondary-school Dutch, English and German in the Antwerp region. From 1975-1999 Sterckx was a TV newsman, and was anchorman on several major Flemish TV newscasts. An MEP since 1999, Sterckx is Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt's "alternate" on the VLD list for the June EP elections -- Verhofstadt nominally tops the VLD list, but he will "give his seat" to Sterckx after the elections. Sterckx has been an active member of the EP Delegation for Relations with the U.S., taking the lead in the Delegation's meetings with U.S. Congressional counterparts on transportation issues such as the Container Security Initiative. Sterckx is personable, soft-spoken and a hard worker. His political influence is greater than his quiet demeanor may lead one to believe -- on February 16 he was named VLD Chairman, and will serve in that function until the Flemish regional and European elections on June 13.

KEY MEPS NOT RUNNING

128. (SBU) The following key MEPs are not running for reelection:

-- Pat Cox (Ireland) ELDR): President of the EP (ref D).

-- Christa Randzio-Plath (Germany) PES): Chairperson of the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee.

-- Dietmut Theato (Germany) EPP-ED): Chairperson of the

Budgetary Control Committee.

-- John Corrie (UK - EPP-ED): member of the Development and Cooperation Committee and Vice Chairman of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly to the African, Caribbean and Pacific States.

-- Jannis Sakellariou (Germany) PES): PES coordinator in the Foreign Affairs Committee.

-- Ilkka Suominen (Finland) EPP-ED): Vice Chairman of the EPP-ED group and a former Minister of Trade in Finland.

-- Arie Oostlander (The Netherlands) EPP-ED): As EP Rapporteur on Turkey, he drafted several reports that were critical of what he saw as lack of Turkish progress in fulfilling the conditions for EU accession.

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